

UNCLE ANDER'S
FLORIDY TALES

WILLIAM STANLEY HALL



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EDNA GARLAND HALL



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PREFACE



November 17, 1930.

This is a delightful book of short stories by Edna Garland Hall, one of God's chosen daughters, who has brought more sunshine into the drab lives of hungry souls than many other writers have had the privilege of doing.

They are good stories—taken from the vast store house of her many experiences. They are exquisite—some will start a smile, many may cause a tear, but all express the genuine sincerity of this sympathetic and loving observer of the Human Drama.

J. E. E. MORRISON, D. D. S.

St. Petersburg, Florida.



DEDICATION

As one who was a "shut in" for several years—I very lovingly dedicate these little "Florida Tales" with the hope, that they will bring cheer to those who are "shut ins."



"Invest in a smile some morning,
It will not cost you a penny,
At the end of the day count your blessings
And you will find they are many."

"**P**HILANDER WENTFORTH! Do you be a tellin' me you hain't went yettohed them mules back into their own do' y'd'— You know full well enuf when the ole sun gits to sheddin' its slantindicular rays an' playin' hide an' seek with the shadders over this here do' y'd' its high time to hed them rumpshus critters in fer the night. Here I hev bread to set to risin', chickens to coop, an' land knows what not; an' you a settin' ther moonin' aroun' doin' nuthin' but whit-tlin' an' shiftin' yer terbacker from one side of yer face to th' next, an' expectin' me to trapse after you to hed in them critters. Now you git to movin' right quick, or I'm tellin' you, you won't be here to tell no more Floridy tales!"

Having given vent to this explosion of wrath, Aunt Prude went into the house, and was soon heard singing, "A Charge To Keep I Have."

To those who knew them slightly, this couple went by their dignified titles of Mr. Philander and Mrs. Prudence Wentforth. To all who knew and loved them, they were just Uncle Ander and Aunt Prude. Their parents were among the earliest settlers and had adjoining farms; as a natural consequence Prudence Pettibone married Philander Wentforth, who was a well known character for many miles around. Telling Florida tales was his joy, and about his only occupation; it never brought him much in money, but his nature was so loving and sunny that he was very wealthy in friends. No one was ever in sorrow or need, but Uncle Ander was there to give out more than money can purchase. Aunt Prude was an opposite in every way. To give a character sketch of her, we will let Uncle Ander tell the following tale:

“Prudence was a awful good woman in sum ways, but she war about th’ graspinest, hankerinst woman after money I ever see. Shucks, many’s the time I made as much as fifty dollars a year, but Prude sed thet wan’t enuf to buy caliker fer her wearin’

things and bed quilts. Prude hed grate ways fer planin' to get extry dollars, an' was alers tryin' sum skeme or tother; one year she tuk to raisin' turkeys; it beat all th' luk she hed. It's about these birds I want to tell ye—I war anxius to git a heap of money fer her fer onc't, so I set abut figerin' fer a right smart while how I cud do it, an' after a spell I hit on a way to manage. In them days I hed a hul lot of busniss thet tuk me as fer as twenty mile frum hum. I rekon I hed as fine a span of mules to driv, as anyone aroun' them regins, an' they war erbligin' to, wud stan' still no matter where I put 'em—awful nice mules abut restin'. Wal, when I war a comin' an' goin' aroun', every time I see a nice little pile of rocks an' pebbles, I wud stop the mules an' lode 'em in my waggin'. About a mile frum our shanty I found a good place to hide 'em. I knowed how I cud use 'em on th' day we war to dress them turkeys, (Prude called it dressin' 'em, but shucks' I wud call it un-dressin' 'em). Sech a day's work as Prude stood me up to, —Ho! Ho! Shucks! It's all over now, but it wan't then—Prude kep sayin' don't it

beat all Ander how nice they be? An' what a good time she'd have fer onc't buyin' sumpthin' besides caliker. I jest shifted my terbacker an' sed huh! I ges so. Prude got mad an' sed I war jelus because th' turkeys wan't mine. Wal, at last thet days work war dun, an' sech a pile of turkey meat I hain't nev'r saw before nor since.

"Th' nex mornin' bright an' erly I loded them male an' female birds onto my ole waggin' an' started. When I got to thet pile of stuns an' pebbles I hed a'ready, I rested my mules a spell, an' stuffed them ole turks fuller than they ever war when alive, Ho! Ho! Shucks! Then I put back ther gizzars an' livers an' got started ag'in, the town of K—, wher I war a goin' to market them, wuz about eighteen or twenty miles away frum hum. Wal, fokes, my mules an' me, we got ther after a spell; when I curved up in frunt of th' market an' the meat man tuk a side luk at them birds, I rekon I nev'r see a more tickleder man no whar then he war when he hefted 'em, he kep exklamin' an' I jest kep shiftin' my terbacker an' sayin' nuthin' all th' time he war a wayin' 'em,

when it kum time to give me th' pay, I axed him to giv' it to me in cash muney, instid of a pece of paper. He gin it to me jest as I axed him to, an' I wasted no more of my valable time in getin' outen ther. I thot if I tuk cash muney Prude 'ud think she hed a pile of it fer onc't.

"I pushed them mules hum in a hurry—I reckoned it wud do me a lot of good to see Prude look real pert an' chipper fer onc't in my spell of years a livin' with her, an' say' she sure dun th' very thing I wanted her to—brigh'ned right up like them turkeys dun when I made a big fire an' dried 'em out aft'r they got most drowned onc't in a thunder storm—Ho! Ho! Shucks! Thet war a reel lot of fun fer me thet day—I alers rekoned thet God gives us a mite of extry luv when we help th' helpless as wel as we know how.

"Wal' I rekon Prude slep no mor'n a thimble ful thet night—I war awake mighty ofen myself an' evr'y time I war, thar set Prude a countin' her muney. I knowed she wudn't spend eny of it fer a few days tew hev th' joy of feelin' an' countin' it — of

corse I new I war boun' to ketch th' mischief sooner 'r later, an' sure enuf I did — jest abut th' time I war expectin' th' Sherif, up he kum to th' do'r; says he: 'Ander I hev kum to arest ye in th' name of th' law.' I jest sed: 'Here I be Sid.' I gin him a side wink an' he knowed I war up to sumpthin' I hadn't orter be. I tol Prude not to spend eny of thet muneey before I kum bak frum town; I got my critters out ag'in an' started along with Sid. I ain't sayin' I dun no reflectin' an' thinkin' on thet ride, fer I war abut as busy with my thots an' my ter-backer as a Floridy moth in a wool bathin' sute.

“Wal, we got to town aft'r a spel an' I hitch'd my span of mules in frunt of th' cort house, an' as I war a lev'in th' critters, I sed to 'em, if they knew eny animule pray'rs to reflect on 'em fer my ben'fit, as I rekoned I'd need 'em before I got throu, an' kler of th' Jedge.

“Wal fokes, I ain't fergittin' in no rush thet Cort room seen—thar sot th' Jedg an' lawyrs an' al th' fokes of th' town, an' rite befor my eyes, whut seemed lik two tuns of

them roks an' pebles—most evry wuman thar hed a big turkey a-wavin' it roun' an' as they set ther peepers on me, they started hollerin' ther he be—th' most miserabl'st man in th' hul kuminety. I loked 'em all in th' eye at onc't an' sed I gesed I war alrite—Ho! Ho! Shucks! I kin laf now, but I sur didn't think about it then.

“Wal' th' seshun opn'd—th' Jedg klered his throat an' sed he wuld lik to hev me tel jest whut I war doin' foolin' peple, an' actin' up as I hed, an' me alers rekognized in th' hul kuminety as sech a respectikated citisun. I riz tew my feet an' tol' them I wuld giv them th' full listeration (illustration) of th' hul thing, an' wh'n I got thru, if it pleased his 'onor to go a mite easy on me I wuld feel erbliged; I gin 'em a nopsco (synopsis) frum beginin' to end, of th' hul thing thet I hed hed on my han's fer y'rs with Prude's achuns over muney, an' what not; when I got dun I rekon ther wa'nt a dry eye ther. Th' Jedg made a noise like Gabr'ls trump't with his no's, then he klered his throat, an' got up an' sed, thet owin' to my awful good standin' in th' church an' ki-

munety, he voted if I wuld gin him th' biggest turkey in th' pile fer his fee, an' I wuld pay Prude th' muney fer it outen my own pocket, he would dismiss the case. I thanked th' Jedge an' left the Cort room felin' mity proud an' sekure thet I got of so easy. Ho! Ho! Shucks! When I got hum I found soneone hed be'n an' tole Prude, an' I rekon no settin' hen hain't nev'r be'n no madder'n she war; she sed she war levin' me at onc't—I tol her to go rite ahed, I didn't blame her a mite.

“Now fer th' best part of th' hul thing—Prude kum back after three days (I hain't never axed her yit wher she war) an' it war woth th' hul excitin' expurence I went thru to see th' dog whiped look she hed in her eyes, as she sed, ‘Ander I rekon I hev ben too graspin' an' hankerin' aft'r muney, an' I hain't goin' to be so no more, but jes' make out like I hev ev'rthin' jes' grand'; an' she says, ‘Ander, don't ye rekon God kin sho me how to git th' things I need most, if I try hard an' trust Him?’ I tole her I rekoned He wuld, as He hed alers dun jes' so by me.

“Wal fokes, I got outen th' hul excitin'

rigmarole so much esier then I expeckated
to, an' it made Prude a awful nice woman
to live with—Ho! Ho! Shucks!

UNCLE ANDER AND AUNT PRUDE TAKE A TRIP TO NEW YORK

“**A**NDER—I deklar to goodness, if you don’t stop parratin’ aroun’ here an’ git down to gittin’ yer things packed, we ain’t never goin’ to ketch thet train fer Noo Yurk this afternoon.

“Here I hev been gittin’ my kloes redy an’ mended this whole blessed year, now if you fool me outa goin’ the las minnit I will sue fer a divorce next week. Now hear me, Ander, fer I’m meanin’ it strong. As helpless as you be you cain’t git along without me no how, an’ thar ain’t no other woman livin’ thet can see outa her eyes, thet would hev you.

“Now I am goin’ to Noo Yurk, an’ don’t propose to leve you in no other woman’s tender care, so move rite along, an’ git yer kloes together, an’ don’t fergit yer overcoat, fer like as not it will turn cold enuf to freze yer hair an’ whiskers into icukles. After all thet would save sumpthin’ fer you could

brek 'em off befor they got melted, an' thet would save yer barberin' muneey to spend on gee-gaws an' tiddledinktums in Noo Yurk."

While Aunt Prude catches her breath for her next wrathful speech, Uncle Ander will relate their trip and experiences.

"Wal, fokes, I rekon you want to here about our day-boo inter Noo Yurk, so let me git my terbacker handy, an' I will gin you the hul trip, side lites an' all.

"Before we go' redy, Prude an' me hed a grate time argerin' which sute t'was best fer to ware, my bein' bilt on the same simlir lines as Abe Linkin, I nateraly wanted to look as much like him as ever I could, as I wanted a good impreshun made on the people when I got inter town. My havin' no sute of my own like Mr. Linkins, I thot fer sum spell who I could ax to let me take one.

Finally I hit on ole Deacon Rennie, he hed a spike tail coat, an' a pare of strip-ped trousers of gray mixtures thet looked mity stilish, (even if they wuz handy-me-downs frum his Granpaw). When I axed him to let me hev the borrowin' of 'em he akted reel

tikled to let me hev 'em as he sed I hed allers dun a hul lot fer him, an' he hed never hed no chanct to gin me a lift. Wal, I took the kloes, an' they did fit me jist fine, an' I felt mity proud of my looks an' figger when I see myself drest up in 'em. I think Prude felt reel proud too, but Shucks! She never would gratify a longin' in me, by tellin' me how fine lookin' I wuz to her, but jist the same I felt her puffin' up inside, to think Ole Ander wuz all hern by the vows an' laws of marage. I think she knew I looked stilisher then her, an' she bein' of thet jelus, hankerin' nater, wuz boun' to keep me back all she could, an' tried to make me ware my Sunday sute of gray mixtures I'd hed fer five years. I sot solid fer onct, an' ruther then gin up her trip to Noo Yurk, she gin down after a lot of cussin' an' snortin' aroun' an' we got the five o'clock train an' started. We rid in one of 'em cars they call Pullem. I kep wonderin' whar in tarnation we wuz goin' to sleep, but about eight o'clock a man frum Afriky kum in, an' started makin' a move here, an' thar, an' say! befor' we knowed whut he wuz about,

he hed a hul lot of little box stalls sot out fer the crowd of us, an' shore enuf, they made a purty good make shift of a bedroom. Shucks! I can't see yit whar he got the room fer the beds frum.

"After all the argerin' an' fussin' I'd hed with Prude befor we got started, I wuz purty nigh tuckered out, an' wuz glad to lay down an' git asleep, an' I slep sum too. Sum-times I would kum awake long enuf to know the ole engin' wuz steemin' along, an' we wuz on our kruse to Noo Yurk.

"Wal fokes, after a time it kum brod daylight, an' time fer us to be turnin' out. It wan't so bad at nite gittin' our warin' aparele off, but I got to studin' how we wuz goin' to manage to git 'em all back on in proper shape. I dun sum stage whisperin' with Prude, an' got her to do sum investigatin' fer us both, an' sure enuf, if we didn't kum out alrite in our nethermost, an' skinermost garments too. About the time we wuz all drest, an' the things we didn't need put back in our valises, in kum the Afrikan agin' hollerin' to step into the dinin' car for brekfust. This wuz all new to

us, but I made up my mind befor we got started on our kruse, we wuz goin' to take in the hul show or nun. I gin' Prude the wink, an' we follered Afriky into his regins, an' say! thar sot the cutest little tables, all laid out so trim an' nice, an' the train salin' rite along, makin' no difurence whether we wuz drinkin' our coffee, or spilin' it on the floor. After the second cup wuz haf down, an' haf up, I dun reel well, Ho! Ho! Shucks! I laffed an' enjoied it all fine, but Prude did look at me funny, an' I gess she felt purty well ashamed of pore ole Ander.

“Wal fokes, about ten o'clock we steemed inter Noo Yurk, an' of all the rakets I ever heerd tell of, it beet 'em all, an' I admit t'was mity confusin' with fust one, an' then tother pullin' at us, an' sayin' taxis sir, taxis, an' all kinds of things. I made up my mind not to be all took in the fust thing, so I sed to Prude we'd set a bit an' watch the show, an' git onter a few things befor we moved. Say! yu don't know how this very sittin' aroun' will kler yer hed, an' gin yu yer klar mind to wurk with. I purty soon see the ones fer us to take our P's an' Q's frum, wuz the

wimmin' with a long ribbon aroun' thar-selves, or a Afrikan with a monkeys red cap, so I picked out a cupel I liked purty well, an' axed 'em jist whut to do, an' say! they jist dun everythin' to make us feel to home, an' esey in our minds. They tol us about a hotel near by thet wuz good, an' would make us feel like home fokes, an' they sent us thar. When we went to the desk to rite our names in a big copy book, we talked a spell with the man runnin' the show. He tol us we could git a room on the top floor whar we could see the hul city most, an' everthin' we wanted. Nex kum our fust ride in a ele-vuter—I supposed we would be about three floors up in the air, but when we kep goin' up, an' up, an' the cage man kep stop-pin' ever floor, an' my feet feelin' as tho they hed landed in my stummick, an' my hed hittin' the floor, I started in wunderin' jist whar we wuz goin' to strike a landin' field, but by an' by he sung out 19th floor top, an' gin the ole boat a swing thet stoped her with a bang, an' made me wonder if I wuz swimmin' er divin'. We got off. Prude wuz green, an' she sed I wuz yellar, but after a

spell we kum to, an' got reel interested lookin' off an' seein' so much. We rested a spell, an' made up our minds to start down on our kruse. We thot it would be nice ridin' down on the elevutar, but by jolly! the sensashun wuz wurser'n goin' up. Thar ain't a mite of question in my mind, but I felt jist as a man duz when they spring the trap to hang him. He knows he is about to drop an' kan't help his-self. As the cage man got started I sure felt the same way, Ho! Ho! Shucks! We sur did strike bottom hard. When we wuz in the air a spell, things klared up an' we felt about nateral, an' it wuz no time till the "inner Ander" got to hollerin' fer sumthin' to eat. We looked in several places, but as sum did not look stilish enuf fer us, an' sum looked too stilish, we hed a hard time decidin'. We kep goin' on, an' on, lookin' in the winders an' gittin' mity inturested, when all to suddint my stummick spoke rite up fer sumthin' to eat. I new thar wan't a thing fer me to do but take the sita-ation inter my own hans, an' handle it. Rite then we kum to a place called 'Tom's Cafteary.' Now I new the

latin root of cow means caf, an' so I thot it would be a nice small little place, but say! I no mor'n steped in behind Prude when I see we wuz in fer a reel show. Thar stood whut looked like haf a mile of fokes all in a roe, each holdin' onto a big tin plate set on a long slipry rail in frunt of 'em, an' the man in the frunt of the roe so fer away frum us I could not see whut wuz goin' on, Ho! Ho! Shucks! I beleve it would hev saved me a hul lot of wurrin' if I hed got my peepers on the show at the hed of the line. Jist as everthin' else kums to a end after awhile, so the fokes got neer enuf thet we could see whut wuz goin' on. In the fust place, standin' back by the wall all down the line, wuz men in white kloes an' hats, an' in frunt of 'em all kinds of foods, an' so much of it I hed to wunder if thar wuz eny left fer eny tother eatin' place in Noo Yurk. I kep watchin' an' I see they wuz puttin' whut the fokes axed fer on plates an' sassars, an' I felt glad, fer I didn't fer a minnit like eatin' offen thet big tin plate, with all the things I expected-ed to git, runnin' aroun' mixin' colors, I don't eat thet way to home.

Prude got to whisperin' to me, axin' whut I wuz goin' to git, an' sayin' whut she wuz goin' to hev, till I got all sort of mixed up in my mind. An' when it kum my turn, an' with so much in frunt of me, an' everthin' lookin' so good, I got to axin' fer this, an' thet, till I hed dishes piled up on my big tin plate till thar wa'nt a mite of room for a nuther one.

"Well, we wuz finely redy to find a place to set, an' wuz purty nigh thar, when I steped on sumthin' slipry an' down I went. The dishes flew in ever direkshun like hens in a wind storm, an' the vittles spillin' on one an' tother of the fokes till they got so mad they wuz goin' to beet me up, an' started in handlin' me so ruff I got a little mite skeered.

"I allers felt Prude hed a lot of fondness, an' berried luv fer me if it hed okashun to kum to the frunt, an' it sure dun it this time. She very kambly sot her tin plate on a table, picked up her omberell thet she hed put on a char, an' kum over whar I wuz strugglin' with too much slippryness to git to my feet. Jist as Prude kum, a dude of a fellar hed

gin me a shuv with his foot, thet sent me sprawlin' agin' an' sez he, 'Ole Whiskers, I'll show yu, yu can't kum in here an' ruin peples kloes fer nuthin; now git up, an' git back inter your harness on the farm whar yu belong.' Thet wuz too much fer Prude—she raised her omberell, an' gin thet dude sich a swash over the back thet he dun no more brethin' nateral fer sum spell. An' then Prude let go the silence she hed been in all mornin'. She reched out her han an' helped me up, an' then she made 'em sich a purty speech about my goodness, an' whut a gran man I wuz, an' allers hed been the most respekted-ed citizun in the hul kumunity whar we lived, an' fer one so fine, to fall inter the hans of sich a pile of critters, made her sick all over. Ho! Ho! Shucks! Whut she didn't tell 'em—in fact she lef so little to be sed, thet I jist sed nuthin' at all. I rekon she hed the silentst crowd to talk befor thet any platform person ever hed. Everone kep so still, yu couldn't here no dishes rattlin' nur nuthin' an' sur enuf, they klaped thar hans, an' sed, good fer the ole leddy. Well, we went to see

whut our bill wuz, an' when the boss sed, he rekoned about five dollars would about even it up fer waste food an' broken dishes, I started in to tell him, I rekoned if I paid him thet much, he hed orter pay me the same fer my injrys in fallin' an' spilin' my sute. I think I mite hev sed it even, if Prude hedn't spoke up an' sed, if it wuz fifty dollars she wouldn't be begrudgin' it, fer the chanct she hed to tell the dude whut she thot of him an' the hul show.

"After Prude showin' herself the loyalst frend I hed thar, I sed nuthin' but paid the bill, an' sed we would be levin' to onc't. Ho! Ho! Shucks!

"I thot the nex time Prude hed a tantrim, an' went after me the way she dun the dude, I would jist hang onto my tonge an' gal-lowses, an' try to remembr how she stuk up fer me in frunt of all thet tribe of Menassah, an' let me see she hed a sartin' fondness fer Uncle Ander after all.

"Wal, as luck would hev it, rite nex door to the Cafteary a sign sed, 'Cleanin' an' Pressin' while yu wate.' Also, 'Barberin' an' Cleanin' up fokes,' so we went in, an'

say! in a hour I steped outa thar a lookin' so much like good Abe Linkin', thet I seen everone turnin' an' lookin' an' sayin' things. I felt reel proud an' perked up agin', fer after my castropy a hour prevus, I hed felt the most dejected-ed man in the hul city of Noo Yurk. It dun me good to see a luvin' look kum in Prudes eyes, an' she sed, 'I ges Ander we best pay Deacon Rennie fer the sute when we git home, an' yu keep it, pervidin' yu don't ruin it gittin' inter scrapes here in Noo Yurk.' As she hed a kute little twinkle in her eyes, when she sed it, I did not git mad with her fer rubbin' in my castropy in the cafteary.

"Wal, after a bit we ackually foun' a nice little place, whar it sed home cookin' like Mother dun, so we went in an' set rite down to the table like all home fokes duz, an' we hed a reel good meal thet tasted good, even if Prude can beet all Noo Yurk in her culnarin' komplishments.

"As we felt reel rested and refreshted, we axed the man whut took our muney, whar would be a nice place fer us to go an' visit thet afternoon. He tol us thet he

beleived we would like the Querin' mity well. I didn't know jist whut he ment at fust, but when he got to talkin' about all kinds of fish, I knowed I hed hern of it onct, an' it wuz the place they caged 'em in. After a bit we got thar, an' we hed a awful nice time lookin' at 'em all, of all kinds an' colors, an' it kep us exklamin' over, an' over, thet God wuz more wunderfuller then we hed relized, to think out so many different sizes an' shapes with so menmy purty colors too. Thet wuz a lovely expurence an' made us feel reel happy to be thar.

"After we got outen thar we seen one thing an' tother to exklame over an' wunder about, an' it got to be seven o'clock befor we knew it, an' when I seen the lites on, I started gittin' a bit skeered, wunderin' if we could git back to the place we wuz goin' to stay thet nite. With the lites on, an' it kum nite, the noises seemed bigger, an thar kum a feelin' thet made me sorter homesick fer my terbacker, an' my ole rockin' char on my own door stoop. I didn't say nuthin' fer I wanted Prude to see no blue fethers stikin' outa me, but by jolly; if she didn't

up an' say, 'Ander, I wish we wuz home this very minnit.' I sed reel cheerful like, 'Oh, shucks; you don't nuther,' but I knew by my own feelin's she wuz tellin' it strait. Wal, I knew we couldn't be home an' in Noo Yurk too, so nuthin' fer me to do but find the way back to top 19, elevutor an' all. I gess I won't go inter too much detale about out trip gittin' back, but after several hours we finally made it, safe—but none too sound in mind an' jints. After we did git to sleepin' I wuz ridin' on eluvators an' Prude wuz beetin' up fokes with her umberell, so we didn't rest much. Ho! Ho! Shucks! Now it feels funny when I reflect on it.

“Wal, we made several days of it, goin' all over—to the Zoos, Nateral History places, an' Mus-ems, an' all sich places everone tol us about. We went to the thetars some too, but Prude got so riled when I waved an' wunked a bit to the purty gals on the stage now an' then, thet I tol her I hed best leve the res of my flirtin' till I kum back by myself sumday. Ho! Ho! Shucks! I lafed to see how mad Prude got. If she only would hev nateral sents enuf to no I wuz only

foolin' an' wouldn't leve her no how, fer eny number of purty gals.

"One day when we got to sayin' we would be levin' fer home soon, I seen a big sign sayin' sumpthin' like this: "Who will pay fer a under-privlig child to hev a vakashun at Mont Lawn.' As I allers hed liked chil-durn an' wished I hed sum, I looked into thet printin' matter quite konsidruble, an' then I tol Prude we would go an' see all about the place they wuz talkin' about.

"We took a train an' got thar after awhile, an' whut a site it wuz to see all them little boys an' gals, playin' an' laffin' an' so hapy fer the fust time in thar lives. They mostly looked purty peeked, but I soon see if they hed a chanct to stay fer a spell thet would ware off.

"Now when I thot of startin' on our kruse to Noo Yurk, I slipped inter the bank one day, an' got out a rite smart lot of my mune, an' I stored it aroun' my kloes here, an' thar, an' I jist kep still about it thinkin' sumpthin' mite turn up thet I wanted mity bad to spend it fer. After I axed a few questions frum one, an' tother of the heds of

the place, about the childurn, I decided I hed foun' the very place I wanted to spend sum of my muney. I picked out a roun' duzen of the pertest of them little boys an' gals, an' jist paid fer a month fer all of 'em, an' I gin the woman at the desk the wink not to gin away my sekret, an' she let me know she would keep it in trus fer me allers, an' smiled on me a powerful sweet smile fer thanks. My! but I felt hapy klar away down inter my ole hart. I knew it would only rile Prude an' rase cane with her if I tol her, so I sed nuthin' about it to her.

"Wal, now fokes—to finish tellin' yer about our kruse, I will tell yer about the only baby gal at Mont Lawn thet I los my hart over. She wuz most three yers ole, her daddy an' mommey wuz ded they tol me, an' they wuz tryin' to find sumone to take her, fer thar own. I went away by myself fer a long spell, an' the more I reflected-ed, the more I new I hed to hev her fer my own. She hed it all over the flowers, the birds, an' butterflys fer bein' smart an' sweet. Her little baby feet wuz allers dancin' an' with her white skin, her eyes like two big soft

brown pansys, her little kurls a flyin' an' her voice allers busy laffin' er singin' baby musik, I deklar I nevr seen no sich pitcher, an' the bes part wuz, she wuz allers runnin' to me, a huggin' an' kissin' me, an' when she put her little baby hans on my face an' sed— 'Grandaddy I luv yer,' I deklar my ole hart jist melted with luv fer her. The outkum wuz, I got her, but it would make my story to long, to tel you whut a time I hed with Prude. After thet seshun I decided a jelus woman wuz the wurst kind of female dragon the ole Nick could send out to foller a man aroun'.

"The more my little flower baby — (her name wuz Elizbth Jane but I called her Rosebud) luvd me the jeluser Prude got, but I stood my grounds, an' we took the baby back to the hotel with us. When the fokes seen her, they wanted her too, but thet little baby hart went so deep inter mine, thet no one could git her away frum her new Gran-daddy.

"In a few days we lef fer home. The time jist flew, with my baby prattlin' an' playin' all the time she wuz awake. I seen Prude

smile onct or twice on the way, but mostly she rased cane, an' showed off till I hed to almos stop carin' fer her eny more.

"I knowed you all would be sprized to see us with a baby gal. But everone of you wuz glad to see us, wa'nt you? An' I brung you all a little treet frum our kruse to Noo Yurk.

"My little Rosebud luved, an' laffed, an' played every day, an' grew purtier an' sweeter, an' I luved her so much thet I most allers took her with me wherever I went, an' when I hed to leve her to home, the hours jist dragged till I could see her, an' feel her baby arms, an' kisses onct more. This went rite on everday till she wuz most nigh five year old. We kep her little bed not fer frum ourn, so I could rech out ever now an' then, an' see if she wuz alrite. One nite she called 'Grandaddy, Rosebud wants a big drink of water.' She hed it rite soon, an' I see she war mity sick, so I tol Prude, an' I went in a hurry fer our Dr. Jules. He wuz the one we knew could help us allers. He hed a long name that wuz sorter hard to remember, so all of us thet luved him, jist

called him Dr. Jules, an' rite here I want to tell yer thet wuz a good name fer him, fer they ain't no Jules thet will ever shine mor'n him. No matter if he wuz laffin' er cussin' his eyes sparkled like all git out, an' menys the time I tol him if he would ware a pair of red satin breeches, an' a blue velvet coat, with a bit of lace ruffles an' flumiddidles aroun' his neck an' hans everone who knew enythin' about the signin' of the deck-laration of inderpendunce would say as well as me, thet one of them ole boys hed riz up from the ded, an' wuz aroun' dockerin' an' fixin' up fokes whut wuz sick, an' alin'. He sure did look like one of 'em. No matter how sick anyone wuz fer miles aroun' they all felt if Dr. Jules got thar they would git well quick. When I foun' him gone fer the nite my ole hart sunk rite down inter the bottom of my shoes. We hed two more doctors in our town, one wuz sorter ole an' run down, but I went fer him, an' he wuz gone too. Thet lef only a chise of a young feller thet hed only sot up in biznis a few months prevus. He wuz about the on-likliest lookin' fellar I ever see, an' it wuz hard fer

eny of us to beleve he knew much about docterin'. Whut wuz I to do but gin him a try? I will say when I axed him to kum he wuz mity spry about gittin' drest an' redy. Wal, he sqinted an' looked mity hard at the baby fer quite some spell then sez he, 'She hes numony extry bad. Hev you eny lard, onions, cornmeal an' turkintine? I want to make a cupel of pancakes.' Prude gin him one percin' look, but got the stuff together, an' he went to wurk, he wuz reel handy, an' in no time he hed two big pancakes, wurkin' on the baby's back an' chist. An' say' it wan't no time till I see things wuz startin' klerin' up. The young Doc stood rite by till daylite workin' an' listinin' to her brethin' ever minnit. When she fell asleep he sed fer me an' Prude to go an' lay down a spell an' he would rest a mite too. Long about seven o'clock he kum an' asked us if we would like to see a purty pichur. When we went inter the room, thar sot thet little tike up in her bed holdin' a big pancake in both her little hans eatin' away on it, an' when she looked over the top of it kute as a kitten an' sed, 'Hev sum Grandaddy, its awful good,' I

deklar thet most got the best of me, an' it sure did Prude. An' rite then an' thar, she sed her jelus ways wuz took outen her ferever.

“When I axed the young Doc whut his fee be, he sed, ‘Not a cent Uncle Ander, but I sure would like yer good will.’ I sez, ‘Young fellar you hev thet mountin’ high, but yer need sum muneey too,’ an’ after a good bit of coaxin’ I got him to take a rite smart sum thet I felt wuz no mor’n he desarved. The nex day I went to see Dr. Jules an’ tol him the hul story, an’ axed him to help the young Doc when he could, an’ he sure dun it mity often.

“So between Prude gittin’ made over, an’ the new Doc gittin’ inter good standin’ in the hul kumunity—everthin’ turned out good an’ we wuz all happy.

“Wal, so long fokes! I will kum an’ gin yer another yarn sum day soon if yer want me to.”

AUNT PRUDE ENTERTAINS THE LADIES AIDERS

“**F**OR pity sakes Ander—well of all the un-knowinest men I ever see, if you don’t beat them all to nuthin’. You know I’m goin’ to hev a hul crowd of the Ladies Aiders here this afternoon to sew, an’ talk over affairs fer our fall bazaar, an’ other soshable events, an’ here you be, sittin’ aroun’ chawin’ an’ readin’ jist as if there wa’nt a thing to do—I tol’ you this mornin’ to get out the quiltin’ frames an’ set ’em up, plenty of wood in fer the fires, the front stoop swep off, a dish of fruit redy, an’ lan’ knows how meny more things, an’ here you set jist as kam, readin’ about some foolish man on a fishin’ kruse, or some more foolisher thing. Now if you don’t want me to tell all them wimmin’ about yer shiftless ways, an’ what I hev hed to put up with fer years, I advise you to git busy an’ do what I hev tol you to do, an’ a lot more.”

After all this advice Aunt Prude went

into a neighbor's house to gossip awhile, and Uncle Ander got busy trying to save his good name; and he is now ready to give his friends the story of the afternoon.

"Wal, fokes, jist as soon as I could git a minnit, I went over to Deacon Rennie's to ax him to kum an' set with me fer the afternoon, thinkin' I mite be a bit lonesum, an' besides I tol him it mite be a purty good show fer me an' him to take in, (of corse not lettin' the wimmin' know we wuz doin' so). Me an' the Deacon wuz raised side by each, an' him knowin' a lot about me, an' me knowin' a lot more about him made us purty good chums, an' we knew our sekrits wuz kep close to us two.

"Since Prude got to steppin' out inter sassity I hev hed a extry lot of reflectin' to do, an' I hev my doubts about its bein' a very elevatin' thing fer her, or eny of 'em—I know it ain't no easier fer me, her gittin' so sot up.

"I allers thot our home wuz good enuf fer us or enybudy, but Prude sez I ain't expandin' an' liftin' up my soul as I orter. Now jist what she means by thet, I heven't

reflected on enuf to tell yer, but I do know thet my tabacker, a good book, an' my ole rockin' chair in the kitching is about as good as enythin' I want, an' these very friends kin alers keep me frum gittin' pisin thots, an' 'pisiin' others too.

"Wal, Prude decided to fix the house over, she grasped, an' horded with all the chicken muney, an' ever way she could, till she got new ferniter fer the parlor, a new rug, (or art square as she called it) fer the floor, instid of the good ole rag carpet she hed wove the fust year we wuz married. She put new curtains to the winders, whiter'n snow an' all ruffles an' flumiddles, an' fixed things till I didn't know if I wuz to home or abroad eny more. I did make a spesul ple thet she would leave me the wood box an' my ole rockin' chair in the kitchin'. So fer, she hain't upsot 'em, but lan' knows the minnit she will start in makin' the kitching over.

"Wal fokes, the Ladies Aiders started aroun' two o'clock comin' frum all direksions, an' before three, they wuz a half mile of 'em thar. Me an' Deacon Rennie kep in the wood-shed whar we could see, but not be

seen. When we wuz sure they wuz all in an' ankored, an' the show commenced, we krep up on the porch, an' set nigh to a open winder, an' I rekon if we wanted to keep rehershin' all we herd thet afternoon if would keep us busy a right smart while—Jolly, I'm here to tell yer thet all absent members, an' thar men fokes frum thet meetin', got about as good a goin' over as they will git when they are bein' questioned by St. Peter his-self. It would take too long to tell you all they sed, but they started in on the Preecher fust, an' went on thru the hul church works, everone from A. to Z. but mostly the men fokes of the absent Ladies Aiders caught it the wust. Fust Miss Laviny Jones (who sed she wuz Miss by chise) remarked thet she thot they hed a Preecher chok full of brains, but why he hed to do so much reedin' while he wuz preechin' she never could make out, an' then Miss Saliny Abbott spoke up an' sed—one Sunday while he wuz discorsin' his twenty minnit seshun she counted one hundred an' twenty five times he moved his hans an' his-self. At thet I noded the Deke an' sed I wundured

if Miss Saliny knew the text he wuz preechin' frum—Ho! Ho! Shux. The nex thing they talked about wuz, they hoped sum day the Deacons would all git sot to onct, an' not hev to be counted an' sorted out frum the crowd ever time Our Lord's Supper wuz about to be sarved, but they sed they felt glad at the last service they hed two Deacons thet could take off the table cloth an' fold it nice an' easey an' not hev it ful of rinkles, an' not hevin' it look so bad as it hed a lot of times prevus. Then Miss Sophy Brent spok up an' sed, she an' other members hed been discussin' Miss Salley who took care of the flowers ever Sunday, an' they knew Miss Salley jist luved 'em but they felt glad she hed no childurn to spile, fer the way she tried to make the posies talk out loud, she sure would spile eny childurn she mite hev hed. Miss Janey Wallet sed on the hole she thot they hed a purty good lot of Ushers—but fust one an' tother of the wimmin' viced thar sentments until I deklar most of the pore fellars hed sumthin' mity rong about 'em. Wal' it went on, an' on, fust one set, then tother ketchin' the ole

mischief till it beet ole Toefoot all they thot of, an' gabbed about. They sed of course they knew it would be mity hard an' lone-sum to git along without a cartin lot of men fokes in the world, but after all, the wimmin' wuz showin' 'em they could purty much let the men take a back seet an' wuz lettin' 'em see they wan't haf so smart as they thot they wuz.

"I kep my ears in tune fer the name of a young woman, (Miss Betsy, by fust name) thet hed lived in one of my houses an' paid me rent regular fer most nigh six year. When I git up before St. Peter I am goin' to ax about Miss Betsy the fust thing, (pervided she gits thar fust), an' I am goin' to tell him thar ain't no Angel thet will ever look eny better'n her to me—an' if them wimmin' hed gone to fer on her, I would hev fixed 'em in a hurry—it jist happened, all they said about Miss Betsy wuz; thet she hed her curosties the same as ever one else. An' it wuz jist as well fer 'em they quit rite thar, Your Uncle Ander will stan jist so much, an' then he kums down ruff, an' things git to movin' then an' thar. I hain't

never likin' gittin' too mad, fer it takes too long reflektin' an' bein' sorry for gittin' so riled.

"Wal fokes—along bout four-thirty they begin' puttin' up thar wurk, an' it kum time fer Prude to start feedin' em, I wuz doin' a lot of wunderfyin' how it wuz all goin' to be managed, but leve it to Prude to skeme—she fust got 'em all sittin' 'in roes, an' so on, then she gin 'em a plate with a cup onto it in thar laps, an' they wuz redy to feed. Two or three of the wimmin' fokes helped Prude pass the things aroun' an' they soon got to eatin'. Guess it all must hev tasted purty good, by the way they all kep still an' sailed in, Ho! Ho! Shux—Deke an' me noded each others elbos an' wunked often, some of 'em spilled thar coffee, an' got a lot of krumms on the 'art square' (as Prude sed I hed to call the carpet) an' Deke an' me got to chuklin' an' wunderin' what kind of fits they would ketch frum Prude when they wuz all gone. But she wuzen't haf as hard on 'em as she wuz on me, bossin' me aroun' to help her. But when it wuz all over an' dun klared away she did praze me a mite,

an' sed I hed worked reel well fer me. As I allers hed been willin' to do a hul lot of work fer a word of praze an' sum kind acshuns, I felt reel chirked up an' glad it went off so good, an' made Prude so proud of her-self an' happy. HO! HO! Shux.

LITTLE TIM'S FORD

NEARLY fourteen months had passed over the small piece of land called by the Simms family, "the farm" since Mr. Simms had been called "on." It had been a very hard experience for little Tim's mother—Mr. Simms was never swift in his work, but plodding along with Mrs. Simms' encouragement and cheery spirit back of him, he was able to provide for his family, and have enough for a few "extrys" now and then.

There was much to be done, hard work is a good softener for grief, so, Mrs. Simms had tried to keep from brooding over her troubles and sorrows.

It was necessary to practise the greatest economy, for the interest was soon coming due on the little home, and there were a good many to feed and clothe out of the washings and bits of work Mrs. Simms was able to get here and there.

Frances, the oldest, was fourteen, and was a good help to her mother. Martha, who was twelve, did errands and what she was

able. Laura, aged seven, was the baby. Mrs. Simms and the other wished her kept free from care as long as possible. The real and only man of the house was little Timothy, nine and one half years of age. Mrs. Simms, in speaking of him to her friends, would say: "If Tim ain' full of brains in his head, then I don't git things right very often."

Little Tim heard his mother talk about the mortgage, and wondering how she could pay it off and save their home was a great source of worry to him. After much thought and planning he decided he had found a way out of their difficulty, and this could best be accomplished by being able to possess a Ford car.

Mrs. Silas Binns, a neighbor, had given joy to Tim's heart when she told him he could have a small express wagon of her grown son's, provided he would carry wood and water when needed.

This seemed easy, and he at once started planning how to get a Ford engine. A week or day rarely passed that Tim did not bring up the subject with his mother. Mrs. Simms said: "I declare to goodness, when that child

sits his brains on anything, it comes his way sooner than later." So it was no great surprise party when Tim flew in one day all out of breath and said: "It has come Ma, I've got me a Ford engine. The rag man's ole Lizzie dun fell down inter bits in the alley, an' he sed as he gin her a kick, 'git ter the scrap heap, or any place yer likes, I'm quit on yer.' I axed him right quick if I could hev the scraps, an' he sed, if I would haul the mess away, an' save him payin' fer it, I could hev it all, an' so Tom Binns is watchin' it till I come to tell yer, an' git yer to see it."

"My savin' soul Timothy, what do you want with somethin' that ain't a mite of good?" asked his mother.

"Cause I know yer kin do everthin' Ma, an' so yer kin help me build a car. Oh please Ma kum on an' see fer yourself." And little Tim flew out of the door on wings.

Mrs. Simms turned down her dress, that had been pinned up to save it, put on an old coat of the 'little account' citizen Simms', and started for the alley that held Tim's treasured car, and, no doubt his fortune.

A crowd stood looking at what seemed a pile of rubbish, but the driver and owner had gone.

"Some car," said one man, as Mrs. Simms came along. "I told Tim you'd be sore for takin' that scrap heap to litter your place."

"Well, I won't," said Tim's mother firmly. "I reckon little Tim's got a hul heap more sense than most of you men,—that ole car don't look much now, but you fellows may not laff when we git through fixin' it, an' git it all iled an' cuttin' figgers aroun' here. Anyway, I want all of you loafers to klar outen our way, fer I'm goin' to help him."

She looked on the pile of scraps for some time before saying: "I'll tell you what we'll do Timothy, I'll go home an' git the chil-durn an' we'll carry all we kin ourselves. The scraps we kin burn, an' that will save us from payin' fer wood. We kin git a man, an' pay him fer haulin' the engine' an' heavy things we can't carry, an' maybe I kin think of some way, so we won't need no man to help.

"Well, I'll be goin' now Timothy," Mrs. Simms said—"you stay an' watch yer en-

gine till I think out a way to git it home fer you. I'm goin' to git that ole engine home somehow Timothy, an' it ain't goin' to cost a cent neither."

Mrs. Simms soon returned, she had a can of gas—some oil, a bucket of water, and with her was Joe Gibbons, (the no account son of Deacon Gibbons as he was called).

Mrs. Simms had done more for Joe than anyone, and knew he had a lot of sense in his head, if one could get it out. She said: "Now Joe, they say you kin make a Ford engine do anythin' to climbin' trees, so git busy an' git this one to runnin' to our house as quick as yer can, an' I'll stay right by to throw water on yer, if you explode the gas, an' sit fire to yourself."

All night they worked, and just at grey daylight were rewarded by a squawking noise that sounded like a lot of geese with a thief after them, then came a hissing, sputtering jerk, and the engine started. It was a tired happy trio that steered it safely into their yard, and a very happy little boy, that felt his fortune was secured by his

Mother's and his efforts getting the "scrap heap" into their possession.

As little Tim laid down to sleep, his last thought expressed before entering "dream-land" was, whether it would be better to call his wonderful car, HENRY or Lizzy, but with a drowsy smile he looked at his mother and said: "Ma, it's goin' to be HENRY—'cause that sounds a hul lot bigger-er."

A GOOD BARGAIN

“WELL of all the darnated chumps—I reckon I am the biggest one to let Sam Gibbs undewly influnce me inter tradin’ my good Ford truck fer this ole rattle trap of his’n. He calls it the ‘Dixie Flyer,’ but if it is a flyer, then I reckon mine could be called a reglar Eagle fer speed.

“The more I reflect on it, the more I know I jist traded with him to git rid of his everlastin’ naggin’ at me about what a grand car his Dixie flyer be, an’ how much more bizness I would hev if I hed it to kruse along the streets an’ avenus—SHUCKS—eny bizness I hit with this heap of rubbish ain’t goin’ to be enuf to git me a new linin’ fer my last winter’s cap.

“I hed jist hed a new coat of paint on my Henry F—— an’ she wuz ridin’ too purty fer words, when along kum Sam, squintin’ an’ nosin’ around an’ findin’ falt, an’ what not, tellin’ me it wuz too bad fer a man of my standin’ an’ bizness ability to be krusin’ the streets in eny sich car. I got so riled an’ upsot I tol him thet he wuz jist plain jelus

of me an' my good lookin' turnout. Say! he went up in the air offen both feet an' landed in sich a fit of madness as I hain't never see before nor aft. Well! one word fetched another till I sez, to show you what kind of car this be, I'll take your ole Dixie Flyer an' try her out, an' you kin take my Henry F. an' if I heven't konvinced yer enuf after you hev rid ten mile thet she kin beat enythin' in view or out of view, I'll give yer back yours an' let yer keep mine too. Now thet I'm not seein' so green an' yeller with madness with Sam's rilin' me so, I kin see this is the very thing he wanted me to say so he could ketch me up on it, an' Sam sure dun it. With my allers tryin' to play fair an' honest, I hed to let him hev my good truck, an' it did not grieve me a mite to giv him back his ole contrapsion, an' besides I hed the fun of tellin' him I wouldn't be seen ridin' to my own funeral in his ole rattle trap of a Dixie Flyer.

“Well I got to thinkin' things over very serus an' decided I would go straight to Mr. Ford an' tell him the hul story, an' jist see what would be his suspision of the matter

—I got inter the place where his office be all O. K. When I lef home I thot I wuz lookin' mity well drest an' bizness like, but when I got inter the main office an' see thet crowd of drest up dudes, an' gals, I got to wishin' I wuz outer thar—I will say fer 'em, they wuz mity perlite, an' if they dun eny laffin' it wuz back of me.

“As I hain't never been no han' to weaken down on a job over a little skeer, when it kum my turn to git inter Mr. Ford's privute office, I stept right along after the gal reel purt like, with my hed an' my shoulders sot back. Mr. Ford wuz sittin' at a big table with what looked like ten millions of letters an' dokuments afore him, an' I felt sorter sorry I wuz goin' to take up eny of his valuable time frum his work. He finely looked up at me reel smilin' an' sed, chipper an' frendly, ‘Well, brother, what kin I do fer you?’ I took to his ways so much thet I felt right to home, an' started right in an' tol him the hul lingo, of how I lost my truck an' all I could think about, of thet ole Dixie flyer. He looked so pert an' pleased, an'

slapped me on the back an' sed I wuz doin' him sich a favor he rekoned he could do one fer me. He helped to pick me out a reglar little beauty of a car, an' the guessin' part of this story be—I ain't tellin' Sam Gibbs or no other persun the trade we made atween us, but I kin tell yer I kum out good an' fine an' me an' Mr. Ford is goin' to be frends right along—HO! HO! Shuks.

SPARK PLUG

“**W**AL, Ander—I must say fer a man thet looks as sensible as you do—at times—an’ act so on-sensible as to spend our hard earned money on eny sich ole contrapsion of a car as thet be—wal, I jist can’t see the pint no way.

“With all the banks a failin,’ an’ us havin’ no mune comin’ in frum killin’ the young chickens, an’ the pullets not layin’ yit, an’ everthin’ aktin’ like it hed shut us out fer good, an’ then fer you to go plum crazy an’ looney over a ole heep of junk like thet, makes me feel like I’m goin’ to be took with a spell of chills an’ fever eny minnit—you tell me you are goin’ to call thet twisted contrapsion ‘SPARK PLUG’ an’ sit a rekord fer speed—Ander don’t yer relize the man whut owns ‘SPARK PLUG’ may come by eny day now an’ take yer inter jail fer deflamin’ the name of sich a high speeder as his horse be; now I’m tryin’ to keep yer outa a big lot of wury an’ truble, an’ if yer can’t help yerself nun then jist go strate

ahed an' git yerself all smashed into bits. I reckon I hev dun all I could to spare yer gettin' inter jail an' gittin' killed."

As Uncle Ander paid no attention to Aunt Prude's advice we will expect him to tell us his experience with his pet car, "SPARK PLUG."

"Wal, fokes—I confess I do feel sorter sorry I didn't take Prude's advice in the fust place, but when I finish my yarn I gess you will see whar I kum out good, an' I'm glad I kep my own hed an' went strate on with my bargain.

"Ever since autymobiles kum inter stile I wuz allers wishin' I could go krusin' in one, takin' my time, goin' an' kumin' back home when I got redy; I hed been keepin' my eye out fer a car thet I could use ruff, an' yit would carry me whar ever I wanted to go. I knew if I went all the places I would like to, I would be travelin' thru' sum mity bad rodes an' I would need a strong car to go in. Since thar wa'nt meny dollars kumin' in frum the sand banks, an' the reglar banks all bustin' up, people wuz takin' to walkin' agin; not by chise—but by flat tires on thar

pocket books, an' ever whar one went they wuz duzens of cars sittin' off on vakant lots, an' in fields, with price tags on 'em sayin' frum ten dollars to five hunderd. Ever day I went nosin' aroun' amung 'em until I got sorter all confused-ed herin' so much talk an' braggin' whut a wunder ech one wuz.

"Wal, one day when I wuz about deceded I wuz fed up on cars an' wuz goin' to giv up the idee of gittin' one, I stood still an' gin' one las' look aroun' an' wuz about to leve the field, when my eye lit onto a sorter forlorn lookin' ole rode bus sittin' off by its-self as if it wuz wunderfyin' whut wuz to bekum of it. As I allers wuz soft harted over enybudy, or enythin' settin' off alone lookin' kinder down harted an' alone in the world, I went over to the pore ole house bus to gin it the once over. I took a lot of time goin' over the sitation an' wuz about decidin' I wuz wastin' my valable time thinkin' enythin' about it, when all to suddint I hed a thot tickle my brains whut made me slap my knee an' laff rite out loud. I see by usin' a little inspire-ation an' a good lot of perspire-ation I could make thet ole contrap-

sion inter a purty good make shift of a house fer daytimes, an' a middlin' good bed room fer nites, an' keep travelin' rite along. I see by doin' sum reel plannin' I could make sum little box stalls fer beds jist as the Afrikan dun whut wurked in the pullem me an' Prude rid to Noo Yurk in, an' I could buckle 'em up in the mornin' jist as he dun, an' use the space fer a sittin' room an' cook house fer daytimes. I wuz goin' to need three beds, so I wuz sum puzzled whar I would sleep. (By the way, fokes, I ain't never tol' yer about my mother-in-law a livin' with me an' Prude, hev I? Well! she has, fer nigh onto fifteen yers. I ain't sayin' it ain't no great task havin' her.) When all in a minnit I decidid on buyin' the rode bus. It wuz on Prude's ma's akount thet I dun it.

“Our town here in Floridy is sorter small an' her knowin' all the single men fokes so well, an' hevin' no chonct to pick a likley one, I jist grabbed onto the idee of gittin' the rode bus an' takin' her along with us. A good change don't do no one eny harm, an' I thot maybe me an' Prudes ma needed

a mite of change fer a spell. With all the places I expected-ed to visit I cackalated thar must be some likley men single, an' out lookin' fer a companion an' a good cook inter the bargain'; as fer as the cookin' is consarned, Prude's ma can do fust rate. Now yer can see why I hed to hev a extry bed fer my-self. As thar wa'nt but room fer two beds inside 'SPARK PLUG' I sot to work studin' whut I could do, an' by an' by I got the plan all fixed whar I could git sum canvas fer a roof an' hook me a mattress onto the side of the bus, fixin' it like a shelf to let down an' up as I wanted it, an' makin' myself good airy sleepin' quarters. When I wuz shore of myself an' knowin' whut I could do—I went to find the man whut owned 'SPARK PLUG' (as I called the bus rite away, fer I wuz shore it wuz goin' to be mine). I soon foun' my man, an' he did look at me funny when I tol' him I wanted the bus, pervidin' it wa'nt too high priced. He sed he gessed he could fix thet part all O. K. an' when he tol me how much he would ask me, I got my muney rite out an' paid him an' got my re-

cipe before he hed a chanct to change his mind an' add sum more onto the price. Ho! Ho! Shuks!

"The nex' thing I got a man to tow it inter my back yard, an' then is whar Prude sot on me so ruff, as yer hev alreddy heerd. I did feel a mite discouraged-ed not knowin' but I hed made a mistake, but I made up my mind to see whut I could do, so I sot to wurk, in' in a cuple or three days Prude begin to sit up her ears to see whut I wuz plannin' on doin'. I sed nuthin' but chawed on my terbacker an' hed a lot of still fun. Ho! Ho! Shuks!

"Finely, a day kum when I wuz all thru fixin' it an' hed everthin' sot to git our-selves outa town. When I axed Prude an' her Ma if they axually wanted to kruse along with me, Prude chirped up an' sed—yer don't think no other wimmin' is goin' in our place do yer? Ho! Ho! Shuks!

"Wall, in dew time we got started. It wuz a lovely mornin' an' it did seem nice to be on our way goin' somewhar, with nothin' to worry about. 'Spark Plug' wuz runnin' fine an' it looked like we wuz goin' to hev a reel

nice time with no truble. We got a good erly start an' dun no slowin' down til about five of the evenin.' Before we got goin' we decedid we would watch out fer good lookin' farmin' places whar we would hev plenty of room to camp, an' git our meals away frum fokes, an' besides we wanted milk, an' lots of other things, like eggs, an' sich as grows on a farm. We wuz lucky an' foun' a dandy place an' our fust nite was as kam an' nice as anyone could expect. The nex' mornin' we riz with the sun an' after a good stuffin' of ham an' eggs an' tother fixin's we got started agin.

"Fer a week or more we kep rite on ridin' days an' layin' by nites an' it beet all how many states we krused thru' an' so much nice country as we wuz seein'. Before we lef home I sed to myself (not lettin' enyone no thet I wuz plannin' on goin' to Salt Lake City) thet if thar wuz eny town whar I would hev luck levin' Prude's Ma it would be thar. I shore felt hapy when 'Spark Plug' sailed rite inter the city as nice an' esey as eny Cad-lak or Roller-Roys ever dun. It wuz erly when we got thar, so we kep on

ridin' an' lookin' aroun'. It shore wuz fine an' I hed it all planned thet after I rested a few days, an' got a bit tired lookin' aroun' I would git me sum wurk, (not thet I wanted the wurk so very much) but I felt the wimin' would be more esear in thar minds, an' if they got to goin' a lot Prude's Ma would be boun' to see, an' be seen by a hul lot of men fokes an' my skeme would start wurkin'.

"After we wuz thar about a month, I got my hopes all up one day, an' wuz laffin' inside, an' thinkin' me and Prude could soon be levin' when everthin' went rong, an' I see I wuz hevin' bad luck gittin' my plans to wurk out good. Wal! we kep' stayin' another month an' no luck wuz comin' to me, when I decided we would be goin' to another state, so I finished my wurk an' got my pay, an' we started. We kep goin' here and thar with no more resultz, when in my sleep one nite I dremed it wuz best to turn aroun' an' start pintin' fer home. We krused along reel well for several days an' I wuz all up in joy over 'Spark Plug' an' whut a gran' bargain I hed got, when like a gun firin', out

went a tire, an' frum then on I tell yer I hed as much sorrow an' truble as Barney Google ever hed when he wuz wurkin' so hard an' gittin' fokes to bet on the race he wuz shore his high speedin' horse 'Spark Plug' would win, an' ever time he got fooled I knew his feelins exactly by my feelins spendin' so much of my valable time reparin' my rode bus, an' payin' out my hard earned muney fer reparin' I couldn't do.

"I wuz gettin' purty nigh discouraged-ed I can tell yer. If only me an' Prude hed been alone we could hev let 'Spark Plug' go an' got our selfs a 'Ford Roder' but no use—I wuz stuck an' nuthin' to do but keep fixin' my bus, chawin' my terbacker an' wishin' I could see home onct more.

"One day when I wuz feelin' reel discouraged-ed an' thinkin' it would hev been best never to hev come on our kruse, all to suddint I see jist whut the truble wuz, an' fixed it in a hurry an' got out of town as fast I wuz able, an' it chirked me rite up to see our selfs sailin' along so purty an' makin' gran' time.

"It wa'nt meny days till we wuz in good

ole Floridy onct more. I wuz drivin' along an' wunderfyin' if I would go strate home to our little town way up the state or take a bit more time an' go to St. Petersburg thet I wuz allers herin' sum one braggin' about. Sumthin' seemed to say—keep goin' Ander an' yer shore will win—I minded whut I tho't wuz sed, an' one gran' day jist like summer in the winter time, we got thar. Goin' over Gandy Bridge wuz a nice expurence. As we kep gittin' inter the city I see I wuz goin' to be reel proud of myself fer keepin' on. Wal! we see one thing an' tother everwhar an' wuz enjoyin' it so much, when turnin' out of one avenew inter another I see sum water an' neer by it a big door yard or play ground I supose it wuz called—an' sich a crowd of ole boys an' gals with long sticks in thar hans whut looked like floor mops with a block of wood on the end instid of rags fer scrubbin.' We got outa the car, an' sot aroun' fer a long while an' watched whut they wuz doin'. After a spell I got a chanct an' axed a man whut they wuz doin. He sed 'shufflin' '. I tol him I gessed he hed it rite—but after sum time longer I see he

tol the truth as I heerd them talkin' an' callin' the game 'Shuffle Board' or sum sich words. Enyhow, I decided I hed struck the rite place fer my line of bisness, an' made a bargain rite thar with myself to git a noo sute of kloes if I didn't hev luck gittin' me a father-in-law—Ho! Ho! Shuks!

"I knew I mus' not let Prude nor no one know my skemin' or I wouldn't hev a mite of luck. I kep a awful klose watch, an' day after day we stayed rite thar on them groun's or on Centurl Avenoo on the green benches. Wal, fokes it wa'nt mor'n ten days to two weeks til I see Prude's Ma wuz takin' to sprucin' rite up, gittin' noo kloes, her hair frizzled an' whut not. An' I mus say she did get rite pert lookin' an' aktin'. I jist kep kam, an' still, an' watchin' the fokes on the green benches an' by jolly in a month she hed got her a man along about her own age, a reel likly lookin' an' aktin' fellar too, whut seemed to hev plenty of muney an' wuz willin' to spend it an' hev a good time.

"Wal, to end my story—we went to the weddin', jist us four an' the Preecher, an' in another day, after they wuz all settled in

a nice little bungaloo me an' Prude sot sail
fer home, an' I hain't never told her yit all
the skemin' I dun to git her Ma offen my
hans an' married. Ho! Ho! Shuks!



